



the upside down series  
week eleven: breakthrough prayer

1. Great \_\_\_\_\_ leads to breakthrough prayer.
2. Great \_\_\_\_\_ is given to those who pray.
3. Great \_\_\_\_\_ are granted those who pray.
4. Great \_\_\_\_\_ reflect a Great God.
5. Great \_\_\_\_\_ is God's when prayers are answered.

*Our focus is on prayer this week. If you're like me, you're not so great at praying. It's too...slow! It takes time to be still and hear the Lord. Yet nothing of value has ever occurred without breakthrough prayer. Let's commit to learning to pray.*

*I'm praying you find this week's lesson a blessing.*



**day one: uh oh**

*Just when you think things are going well, something happens to tip the balance.*

*Let's read Acts 12:1-5 and catch up with our friends in the early church.*

### **exploring the text**

- 1.** In vs. 1 it says “about that time”. What time is it talking about? What was happening about that time?
  
- 2.** Is it surprising that opposition would come as God's work is flourishing? Why or why not?

3. James is the second martyr. What do you know about him? Read Matthew 4:21 and use a study Bible like Macarthur's if you have one!

interesting fact

4. Why were the Jews glad about James' murder?
5. What was Herod's motive in arresting Peter?

The words without ceasing mean, in the original, stretched-out-ly, with great intensesness. Prayer is not only taking hold of God but hanging on.

6. What precautions were taken to keep Peter in prison?
7. What did the believers do when they heard Peter was in prison?





## day two: wake up!

*Remember that our focus is on prayer this week.*

*Start this morning in prayer. Pray for understanding. Pray for conviction. Pray for intimacy with the Lord. Pray for growth. Pray for a heart that is tender to the Holy Spirit.*

*Now read Acts 12:6-11.*

### exploring the text

1. What was Peter doing in prison and how was that possible?

2. Describe in your words what happened on that night in prison.

3. How specific in his instructions did the angel have to be?

#### interesting fact

God often delays the answer to prayer until the very eve of extremity. Peter was made a better man for having been brought close to the hour and then delivered.

4. In vs.10, what happened to the gate?

5. Finally in vs. 11 Peter figures it out. What does he say?

6. Go back for a second to vs. 6, what were the Christians doing while Peter was already being set free?

interesting fact

Omnipotence takes time. We are impatient and run ahead of God. We will make better progress if we regulate our pace to fall in with His.

### personal application

7. Are you praying for something right now that looks impossible to resolve?





## day three: unbelievably true

*The answer is on the way. You're about to enjoy today's reading. It's a great story and I really like Rhoda, the girl we're about to meet. I'm praying for steadfastness of heart for you as you continue to study God's word.*

Read Acts 12:12-19.

### exploring the text

1. Where did Peter go as soon as he was freed?
2. Who was Rhoda?
3. What was Rhoda's reaction to seeing Peter?
4. How did those gathered in prayer respond to Rhoda? Does that surprise you?

verse

Matthew 18:19-20

Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.





## day four: to God be the glory

*There is nothing in the world like seeing God answer an impossible prayer request. And He does it for His children all the time. You just need to learn to pray and trust Him.*

Read Acts 12:20-25 today.

### exploring the text

1. What was Herod's perception of himself?

2. Why was Herod struck down?

3. How did the angels' touch affect Herod in vs. 23?

4. How can you tell in vs. 24 that God had a purpose in all that happened to Herod?

prayer

All glory,  
all honor,  
all blessing,  
all power belong  
to God.  
Are you glorifying  
God in all of  
your life?





## day five: time in prayer

*In order to see God answer prayers, you've got to move on from talking about prayer and studying about prayer to actually praying.*

*I like to use the acrostic ACTS when I pray.*

A Adoration  
C Confession  
T Thanksgiving  
S Supplication

*Set a timer for 20 minutes and spend 5 minutes on each of the elements of ACTS!*

**quote**

To be a Christian  
without prayer is  
no more possible  
than to be alive  
without  
breathing.  
Martin Luther  
King Jr.